

FLIGHT JACKET

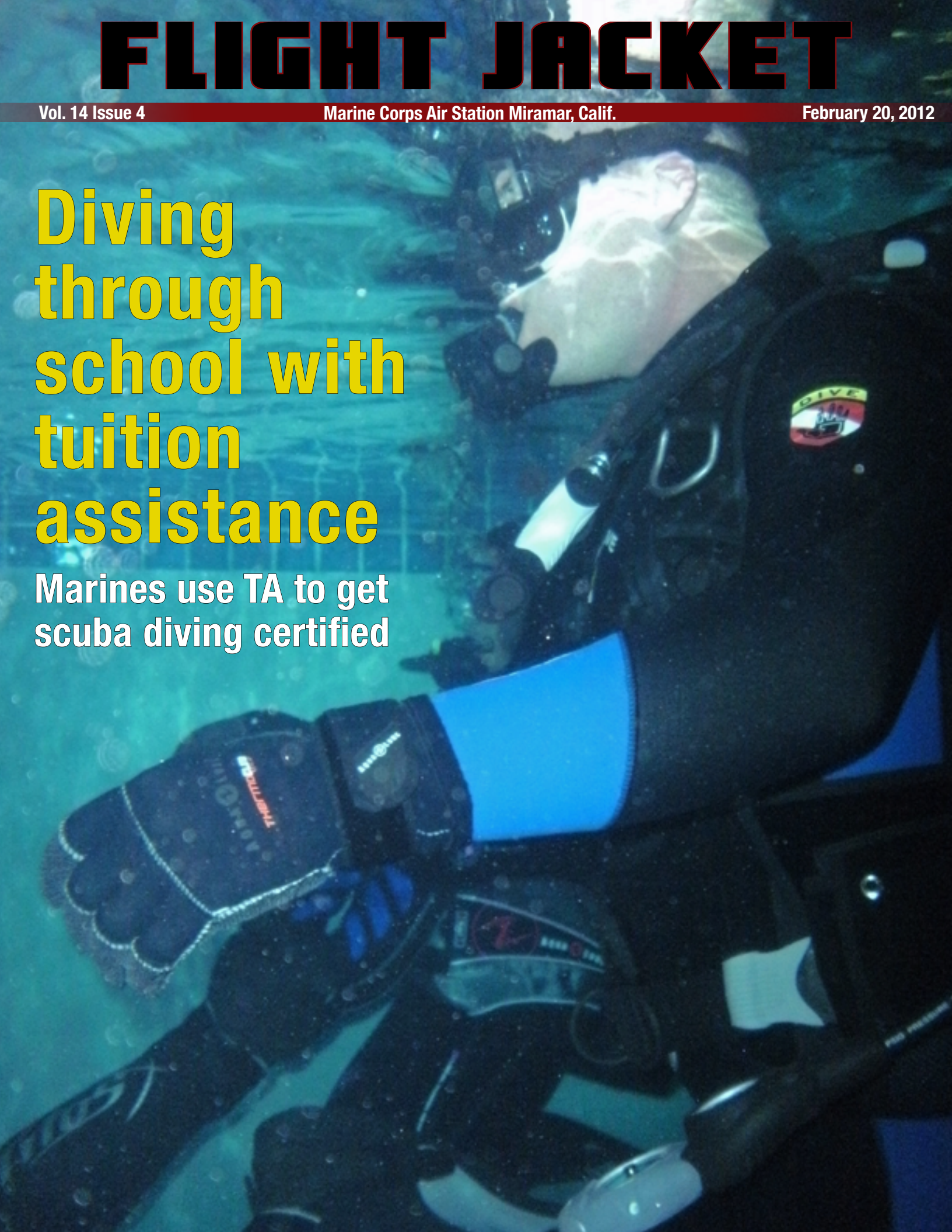
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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

February 20, 2012

Diving through school with tuition assistance

Marines use TA to get
scuba diving certified





MWCS-38 Marines recognized for heroic response

For their embodiment of honor, courage and commitment through their life-saving actions, two Marines received prestigious medals aboard MCAS Miramar.

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Zoom, focus, click: intelligence photographed

Patience, passion and an acute eye for detail are distinct traits found in one Marine who has been shooting photos since her first year of high school.

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TA picks up scuba tab

Marines can use tuition assistance to get scuba diving certified. North County Scuba Center collaborates with Mira Costa College to offer them a chance to receive different levels of diving certification.

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Maj. Gen. Andrew O'Donnell Jr.
Commanding General
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



Col. Frank A. Richie
Commanding Officer
MCAS Miramar

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Marine Corps:

past
meets
present

Photos by
Pfc. Christopher Johns



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. - Col. Shaun L. Sadler, right, the Marine Aircraft Group 39 commanding officer, speaks with a retired Marine officer, who served in the Korean War era at a flight simulator facility here Feb. 7.



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. - A group of retired Marine officers, many who served in the Korean War era, prepares to enter a flight simulator facility here Feb. 7. The veterans visited the air station to learn about the Marine Corps' technological advances. (More photos next page)

ON THE COVER:

SAN DIEGO – Cpl. Doug Burkhart, an Arabic linguist with 1st Radio Battalion at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and a Porterville, Calif., native, practices ascent skills at the Pacific Athletic Club Feb. 4. Marines can use tuition assistance to help pay for scuba diving certifications with the North County Scuba Center. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller)



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. - Retired Marine officers from The Basic School classes of 1952 visit here Feb. 7. The retired Marines reunite every five years, visiting a Marine Corps installation to witness the past and present military differences. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher Johns)



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. - A group of retired Marine officers from The Basic School classes of 1952 listens to a presentation at flight simulator facilities here Feb. 7. Marine Aircraft Group 39 pilots gave classes to the retired Marines about modern warfare equipment like heat sensitive sighting mechanisms for finding enemies. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher Johns)



SAN DIEGO - Maj. Gen. Ronald L. Bailey, center, the commanding general of 1st Marine Division, visits with Marines and San Diego Rotary Club 33 members during the Salute to Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen of the Quarter and Year luncheon here Feb. 9.

San Diego Rotary Club salutes service members

Photos by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo



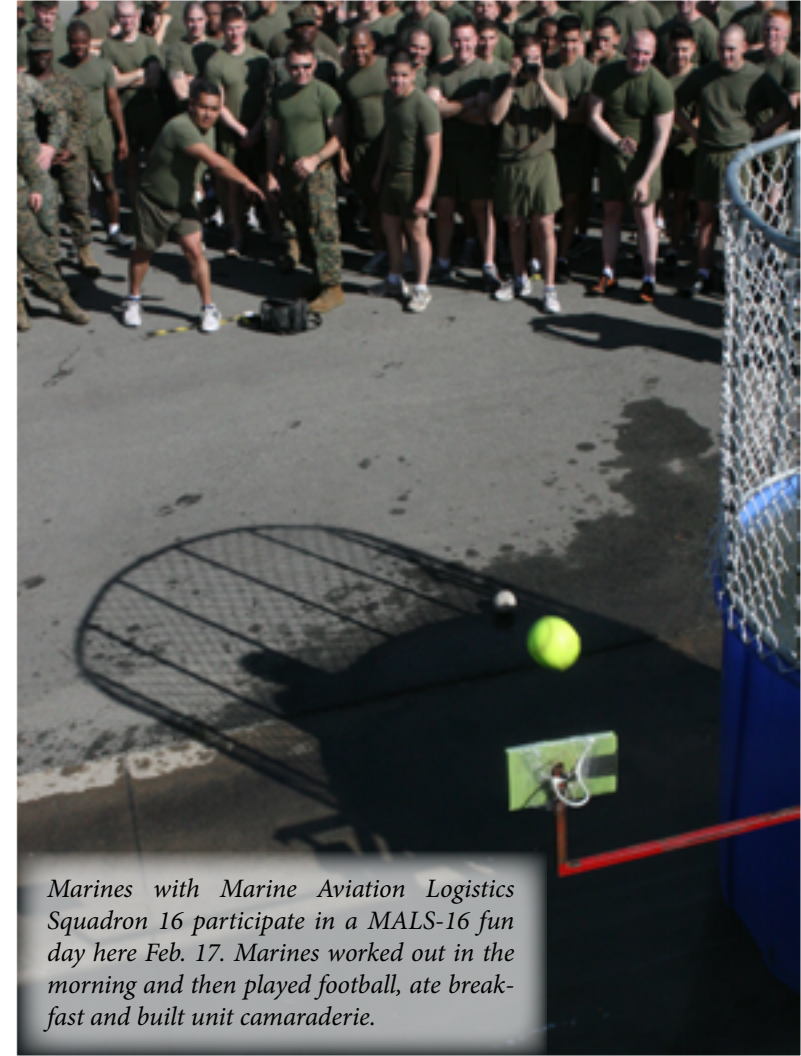
SAN DIEGO - Maj. Gen. Ronald L. Bailey, the commanding general of 1st Marine Division, thanks retired and active-duty military members for their service during San Diego Rotary Club 33's Salute to Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen of the Quarter and Year luncheon here Feb. 9.



SAN DIEGO - Maj. Gen. Ronald L. Bailey, the commanding general of 1st Marine Division, thanks retired and active-duty military members for their service during San Diego Rotary Club 33's Salute to Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen of the Quarter and Year luncheon here Feb. 9. The Rotary Club invited more than 50 Marines and sailors from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms and Navy Region South West to enjoy a free lunch in gratitude for their service. Each Marine and sailor in attendance was recognized by their command and given the title of Marine or sailor of the quarter or year in 2011.



Gunnery Sgt. Christopher Greene, the maintenance division chief with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 and a North Plains Field, N.J., native, falls into a dunk tank during a MALS-16 fun day here Feb. 17. Marines worked out in the morning and then played football, ate breakfast and built unit camaraderie.



Marines with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 participate in a MALS-16 fun day here Feb. 17. Marines worked out in the morning and then played football, ate breakfast and built unit camaraderie.

Fun day a splash for logistics squadron

Photos by Pfc. Christopher Johns



Marines with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 watch as a Marine crashes into a dunk tank during a MALS-16 fun day here Feb. 17. The Marines enjoyed a cookout after a morning of exercise, building unit cohesion.



Families from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462 await the arrival of their Marines during a welcome home celebration here Feb. 11. Marines of HMH-462, the “Heavy Haulers,” returned from a six month deployment to Helmand province, Afghanistan.



Families and Marines reunite during a welcome home celebration for Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462 here Feb. 11. Marines of HMH-462, the “Heavy Haulers,” returned from Helmand province, Afghanistan, after a six month deployment.



Maj. Gen. Andrew O'Donnell Jr., the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing commanding general, and Col. Patrick Gramuglia, commanding officer of Marine Aircraft Group 16, greet Marines of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462 during a welcome home celebration here Feb. 11. HMH-462, the “Heavy Haulers,” returned from Helmand province, Afghanistan, after a six month deployment.

‘Heavy Haulers’ make final landing

Photos by Sgt. Deanne Hagstrom



Aaron, son of Capt. David Coleman, a CH-53E pilot with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462, checks the position of his sign during a welcome home celebration here Feb. 11.



Maj. Gen. Andrew O'Donnell Jr., commanding general of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, welcomes Marines of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462 home Feb. 11.



MWCS-38 Marines recognized for heroic response

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo

For their embodiment of honor, courage and commitment through their life-saving actions in the spring and summer of 2011, two Marines from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., received prestigious medals, Feb. 15.

Marine Wing Communication Squadron 38's Cpl. William A. Turner, a satellite communications operator and a Pensacola, Fla., native, was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and Sgt. Jeremy W. Caddell, the squadron deputy family readiness officer and a Web City, Mo., native, was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for playing essential roles in the survival of others.

While surfing along the shores of Mission Beach with a friend in San Diego, March 5, 2011, Turner noticed the hands of three civilians who were struggling to keep their heads above the water.

"I immediately let go of my board and swam right out to them," said Turner. "I don't know why. I just saw them struggling and knew I should help them."

Turner placed the safety of the drowning victims above his own as he continued to hold one member of the group above water for approximately 10 minutes in the midst of dangerous currents while the others were taken to shore by rescue personnel.

"I have never had to respond to anything like this before, but I had worked as a lifeguard for two years prior to joining the Marine Corps," said Turner. "I didn't really think about it. I knew what to do and just did it."

For these valiant and selfless actions, Tuner was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

In another act of instantaneous response and heroism, Sgt. Jeremy W. Caddell provided emergency medical action and response to a fellow Marine who had been in a motor-vehicle accident.

On July 31, 2011, Caddell and his fiancé approached an intersection to find a hunk of twisted wreckage blocking the way. Caddell, without fear of his own safety, rushed from his vehicle to aid an injured man later identified as Gunnery Sgt. David W. Smith, the training chief of Headquarters and Service Battalion, Marine Corp Recruit Depot San Diego and a Star, Texas, native.

Smith, stopped at an intersection on his motorcycle, was hit by a motor vehicle driving approximately 45 miles per hour. The impact then flung his body 97 feet into an intersection.

"I saw a man, jumped out and began high-tailing it over to him," said Caddell. "We [motorcyclists] are taught that if there is ever a wreck, you stop and help. I also knew he should not be moved and was yelling for people not to touch or attempt move him."



Col. Bruce Barnhill, commanding officer of Marine Wing Communication Squadron 38, presents Cpl. William A. Turner, a satellite communications operator and Pensacola, Fla., native, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal Feb. 15 for playing a crucial role in saving the lives of three swimmers caught in violent currents along the shores of Mission Beach on March 5, 2011.

After ensuring medical personnel had been contacted, he and a registered nurse on scene performed a textbook rollover of Smith, preventing asphyxiation. He then continued to provide care until paramedics arrived on scene.

"At the time it felt like forever for them to get there," said Caddell. "Looking back, I guess it was only a few minutes."

Smith woke from a 10-day coma to learn he had sustained lacerations to the liver and kidney, a subdural hematoma and a hematoma in his throat. He also suffered an internal decapitation, completely separating his skull and spine.

While a decapitation has a 97 percent fatality rate with 28 percent of survivors becoming quadriplegic, Smith walked, not rolled, away from the hospital in three weeks and two days.

"Because of his actions and how quickly he responded and the sequence of events he chose to take I am able to stand here and walk again," said Smith. "It means the world to me. He is my hero. He is the reason I am alive."

In recognition of his immediate acts of heroism that allowed Gunnery Sgt. David W. Smith to live, Caddell was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal.

These two Marines, exemplifying the highest values of the Marine Corps with their immediate aid and subconscious protection of others, set an example for their fellow Marines within MWCS-38 as well as throughout the Marine Corps.



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. – Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 secure a fuel hose after refueling an AH-1W Super Cobra here Feb. 14. MWSS-373 visited Landing Zone Star, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, for training operations by setting up Forward Arming Refueling Points in support of Scorpion Fire Phase II.

Scorpion Fire: MWSS-373 provides refueling

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. – Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 visited Landing Zone Star, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., for training operations by setting up Forward Arming Refueling Points in support of Scorpion Fire Phase II.

In combat, FARP provides support any time of the day or night to ensure aircraft do not have to return all the way to base to refuel, but can reenter the fight more quickly.

“We’re actually not conducting training,” said Sgt. Jason Bacha, a bulk-fuel specialist with MWSS-373 and a Pittsburgh native. “We’re in support of training pilots who are going to be deploying sometime soon.”

Even though the training is not specifically for MWSS-373, they still benefit from the exercise.

“It’s good training for us, especially me since I’m coming straight out of the school house,” said Pfc. Adam Farley, a bulk-fuel specialist with MWSS-373 and a Burt, N.Y., native.

FARPs are the only time bulk-fuel Marines actually conduct hands-on refuel training. At military occupational specialty school, bulk-fuel specialists mostly do in-classroom work, and the only hands-on training they receive is setting up the equipment, explained Gunnery Sgt. Erick Lee, the FARP officer in charge with MWSS-373 and a Fairfax, Va., native.

“There is no aircraft refueling at the school house,” said Lee. “As far as the young Marines, this is pretty much

where they’ll learn all the safety precautions, and they’ll learn all the procedures for refueling.”

Safety is the most important part during the training evolution. Bulk-fuel Marines must ground the aircraft before beginning fueling operations due to static electricity produced from the rotor blades.

“Anything can go wrong during training, especially with hot refueling points, which means the birds don’t shut down,” said Farley.

Bulk-fuel specialist also conduct cold refueling, during which the aircraft is shut down.

“There’s a lot of dangers when the aircraft is still on,” said Lee. “You have the rotor blades still running, and when dealing with small aircraft like the Cobras or Hueys, their tail rotors sit really low. If you’re not paying attention, you could run into the tail rotors.”

MWSS-373 not only provides fuel for the aircraft, but they are there to provide safe support for the pilots to return to their mission.

“The most important thing is these pilots are getting the experience they need to go into a combat zone, and have the confidence they need to fly out and carry on with whatever their mission is,” said Bacha.

Scorpion Fire is a two-week training evolution to provide support for pilots’ pre-deployment training. Though the mission is not necessarily conducted for MWSS-373, they are benefitting from the training by sustaining individual proficiency.



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. – Pfc. Bradley Hinsley, a bulk-fuel specialist with Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 and a Bakersfield, Calif., native, signals to shut off the fuel flow here Feb. 14.

(Left) MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. – Pfc. Bradley Hinsley, a bulk-fuel specialist with Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 and a Bakersfield, Calif., native, secures the fuel hose after refueling an AH-1W Super Cobra here Feb. 14.

(Right) MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. – Staff Sgt. Anthony Welch, a Forward Arming Refueling Point assistant team leader with Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 and an Alexandria, La., native, checks the amount of gallons being pumped into an aircraft here Feb. 14.



Marines with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 561 anchor stacks of mattresses to the pad eyes here Feb. 13. VMM-561 conducted emergency landing pad procedures for MV-22B Ospreys.



VMM-561 lands in bed during training

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 561 conducted emergency landing pad procedures for MV-22B Ospreys aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Feb. 13.

The training helps pilots react if an aircraft suffers landing gear malfunctions. One Osprey practiced landing to test the configuration of the pad eyes. Pad eyes are used to anchor the ties that hold the numerous stacks of mattresses together, ensuring they can withstand the down wash of an MV-22B or a CH-53E. Mattresses are used to protect the aircraft frame from damage.

“We’ll have one of our crew chiefs guide the aircraft down from a distance and land them on the mattress [stack],” said Capt. Christopher Demars, an aviation safety officer with VMM-561 and a Wilson, N.C.,

native. “That’s a safe way to try to get the aircraft on the deck without the landing gear fully extended.”

The same practice exercise was conducted in October 2011; however, it did not go as smoothly since the mattress stacks were unstable and not ideal for landing.

“The difference between then and now is night and day,” said Staff Sgt. Jason Giovinazzi, an Osprey air-frame mechanic with VMM-561.

The training exercise was significantly better than the previous training due to the location and number of pad eyes.

In a real life situation, a pilot would call the tower and let them know they are having trouble with the landing gear, and then the maintenance Marines would assemble at the only dedicated emergency

landing pad for the MV-22B and CH-53E aboard MCAS Miramar.

“We would grab our gear, come out here and then walk [the pilot] through trouble shooting steps,” said Giovinazzi. “Worst case scenario, they would be landing on the mattresses.”

Once the aircraft makes an emergency landing on the mattresses, it is then shut down. The maintenance Marines jack up the aircraft to figure out what happened with the gear.

“We’re just trying to find ways to do training to set things up better and to make them safer,” said Demars.

This was only a training emergency landing pad procedure, should an actual emergency occur, VMM-561 is ready.



Marines with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 561 check mattress stacks for stabilization here Feb. 13. VMM-561 conducted emergency landing pad procedures for MV-22B Ospreys where aircraft land on mattresses in case of landing gear malfunctions.



Illustrious history: the Corps' oldest squadron

Story by Pfc. Christopher Johns

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, Va. – Marines with Flight 1, 2nd Air Squadron, Marine Flying Field, Marine Barracks, Quantico, Va., fill bomb shells for a Martin MBT biplane aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., in the early 1920s. Flight 1 eventually became Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11, whose mission has been to support Marine Corps aviation for nearly a century. (Courtesy photo)



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION EL TORO, Calif. – Marines with Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, Calif., practice parachute operations over San Diego in the early 1940s. Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11, originally Flight 1, 2nd Air Squadron, Marine Flying Field, Marine Barracks, Quantico, Va., has provided logistics, support, guidance and direction for aviation squadrons throughout its 90-year history. (Courtesy photo)



MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, Va. –A group of Marine pilots prepare to fly a DH-4 biplane aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., in the early 1920s. Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11, originally Flight 1, 2nd Air Squadron, Marine Flying Field, Marine Barracks, Quantico, Va., has provided logistics, support, guidance and direction for aviation squadrons throughout its 90-year history. (Courtesy Photo)

Flying Marines to the heart of Helmand province in Afghanistan and carrying cargo to villages in Africa in need of supplies are just two of the many responsibilities of Marine Corps aviation assets.

But whose job is it to make sure the aircraft have everything they need to accomplish these missions?

The answer is simple: Marine Aviation Logistics Squadrons.

The oldest squadron in the Marine Corps, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11, has served those needs for more than 90 years.

The Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 was originally activated in December 1921 as Flight 1, 2nd Air Squadron, Marine Flying Field, Marine Barracks, Quantico, Va.

“The name was redesignated several times over the decades,” said the squadron’s historian, Capt. David S. Kim, the operations officer with MALS-11 and a New York, N.Y. native. In fact, it was redesignated a total of nine times before 1954. By Oct. 5, 1988 the name officially changed to MALS-11.

Although the Marines worked under several different names, the mission has stayed the predominately the same – to provide unparalleled aviation logistics support.

Providing support is exactly what MALS-11 has done for almost a century, from the flight lines of Quantico, Va., to the battlefronts of World War II and the operations of today’s modern warfare.

To pass on the history of the squadron, the senior Marines of the command gathered their Marines, sharing the wonder of MALS-11’s illustrious past.

Part of this past took place in the city of Danang, Vietnam, where the squadron, at the time called Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 11, supported 12 different types of aircraft in the first attacks on Viet Cong forces.

MALS-11 kept up its standard of support again in the Persian Gulf War and in Operations’ Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom, and Enduring Freedom.

The squadron has provided aviation related logistics support to 144 F/A-18(A-D) Hornet and 14 KC-130J Hercules aircraft assigned to MAG-11.

“MALS-11 also maintains 429 maintenance mobile facilities,”

said Kim. “Fourteen of which are currently deployed throughout the world with Operation Enduring Freedom and Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms.”

The squadron also has a power-plants division that is one of three Naval Aviation Enterprise centers of excellence for first degree engine repair for the General Electric F404-400 and -402 engines used on the F/A-18(A-D) Hornet for both Marine and Naval Aviation, said Maj. Miguel A. Ayala, the executive officer of MALS-11 and a Corozal, Puerto Rico, native. The mission of the power-plants division is to maintain and service the engines of the aircraft of MAG-11 so that the unit can accomplish its mission.

Not only has MALS-11 set the standard for aviation logistics throughout the Marine Corps by constantly accomplishing their supportive missions, they also bring excellence to the table in competitions as well.

The squadron received the 2003 Marine Corps Aviation Association Marion Carl Award for Squadron of the Year. The logistics squadron also received the Marine Corps Aviation Association Colonel Donald E. Davis Award for Best Aviation Logistics Squadron of the Year in 2004, 2007 and 2009. The unit was also recognized as the Naval Aviation Enterprise Air Speed Site of the Year for 2008 and 2009.

“I’m absolutely honored to be in command of the oldest squadron in the Marine Corps,” said Lt. Col. Patrick S. McDoniel, commanding officer of MALS-11 and Derby, Kan., native. “My obligation is to set the conditions and provide the opportunities for the “Devilfish” of MALS-11 to maintain the high bar of aviation logistics support excellence we’ve provided throughout our squadron’s long history. Our squadron has a proud tradition, and will continue to be that MALS known for taking the lead on innovative, groundbreaking concepts and programs that improve support to, and the combat capability of the squadrons of MAG-11 and Marine aviation.”

For 90 years, the Marines of MALS-11 have provided support to Marine Corps aviation and led the way in planning, implementing and coordinating support missions. Since 1921, MALS-11 continues to strive in setting the standard for innovation and excellence within aviation logistics.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)

[RETURN TO TOP](#)



Lance Cpl. Jantael Brown, an intelligence analyst with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 and a Chicago native, photographs the clouds above Mills Park here Feb. 15. Brown started photography in her freshman year of high school and has nurtured her passion for the art ever since.

Zoom, focus, click

Intelligence photographed

*Story and photos by Pfc.
Christopher Johns*



Patience, passion and an acute eye for detail are distinct traits found among photographers – including one Marine who has been shooting photos since her first year of high school.

“In freshman year we had to pick an art class,” said Lance Cpl. Jantael Brown, an intelligence analyst with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314. “[Photography] was interesting, and the more I got into it, the better I did.”

Her love for photography was so great, she took advanced placement classes and spent every free moment in the photo lab.

During her senior year, colleges from all over the state came to Chicago, giving students a chance to compete for scholarships.

“I had an English teacher who was really interested in my artwork,” said Brown. “If I had my work finished, she would let me go to the photo lab. She knew I was competing for a scholarship.”

The scholarship Brown earned with her photographs was to Illinois State University, which paid for four years of school.

Although her classes were paid for, Brown still struggled to pay for books and living expenses. She then decided to join the Marine Corps, to take advantage of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits.

Brown is extremely happy with her choice to join the Marine Corps because it gives her the discipline to focus on her education.

“I understand how important it is not to lose

focus in college,” said Brown. “My family tried to tell me I couldn’t [make it in the Corps] – I wasn’t disciplined enough. I wanted that challenge. I knew the Marine Corps would definitely give me the discipline and challenge I wanted.”

Brown’s passion for photography never died. Her eagerness for a challenge and love for photography mirrors her love for being an intelligence analyst.

“She takes her job very seriously,” said Master Sgt. Gilbert Guzman, the administrative chief for VMFA-314 and a Greeley, Colo., native. “She knows it’s a very serious job, and she understands the information she’s giving and briefing about is intended to save lives. She loves it.”

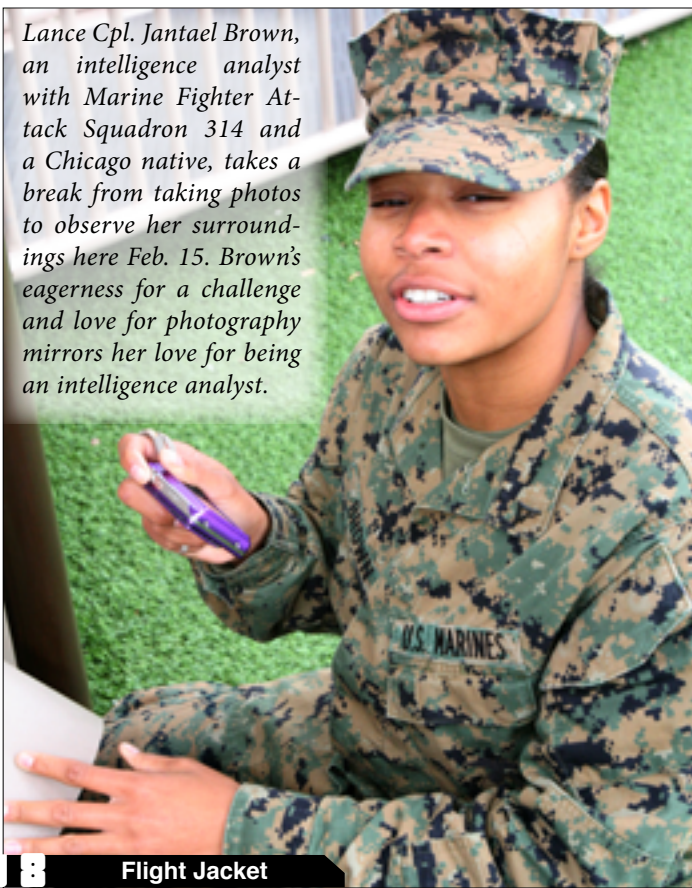
Brown strives to perform her job the same way she treats photography – with interest and intensity.

“She always makes it sound like she wants to be here,” said Guzman. “She comes into the [office] quite often with a smile on her face, and she never looks stressed out.”

Brown’s way of dealing with stress is through photography. Taking photos is very calming, it’s almost therapeutic, she explained.

Brown’s zeal for photography began with an elected class in high school and has turned into a hobby that has helped develop her into the Marine she is today. Brown is currently going to college to earn her degree in general studies, and hopes to earn a degree in the intelligence field.

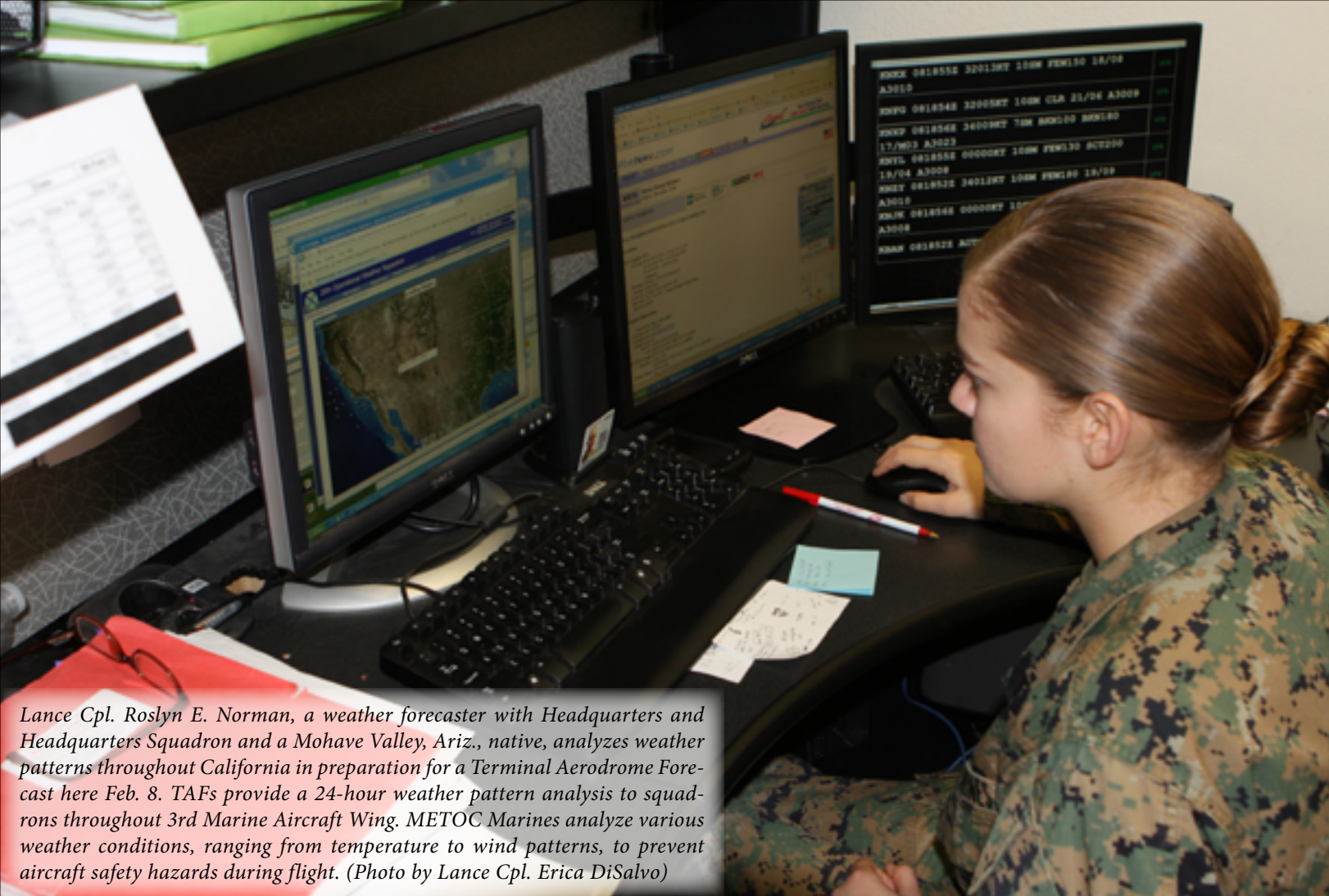
Lance Cpl. Jantael Brown, an intelligence analyst with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 and a Chicago native, takes a break from taking photos to observe her surroundings here Feb. 15. Brown’s eagerness for a challenge and love for photography mirrors her love for being an intelligence analyst.



Lance Cpl. Jantael Brown, an intelligence analyst with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 and a Chicago native, photographs a slide at Mills Park here Feb. 15. Brown uses photography to relax after work and on the weekends.



Lance Cpl. Jantael Brown, an intelligence analyst with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 and a Chicago native, takes a photo of a palm tree here Feb. 15. Brown is currently going to college to earn her degree in general studies, and hopes to earn a degree in the intelligence field.



Lance Cpl. Roslyn E. Norman, a weather forecaster with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and a Mohave Valley, Ariz., native, analyzes weather patterns throughout California in preparation for a Terminal Aerodrome Forecast here Feb. 8. TAFs provide a 24-hour weather pattern analysis to squadrons throughout 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. METOC Marines analyze various weather conditions, ranging from temperature to wind patterns, to prevent aircraft safety hazards during flight. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

Forecasters watch skies over MCI West

Story by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo

Meteorology and oceanography analyst forecasters spend 24 hours a day reviewing air pressure, cross winds, high winds, upcoming thunderstorm possibilities and other crucial weather conditions that play a vital role in the outcome of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing's missions. As the only natural-science-based military occupational specialty within the Marine Corps, METOC forecasters serve a unique purpose. Forecasters are responsible for observing and reporting all weather patterns spanning the entire route an aircraft takes during flight. METOC Marines analyze every aspect, ranging from temperature to wind patterns to prevent safety hazards. Elevation, humidity, turbulence, icing and a variety of other factors for not only Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., but bases across the country are included in 24-hour forecasts known as Terminal Aerodrome Forecasts. Analysts distribute TAFs every six hours throughout the 3rd MAW to ensure up-to-date information is seen by squadrons. "[Our office] provides aviation weather forecast and support for all

bases and air stations throughout Marine Corps Installations West," said Sgt. Jessica N. Kruppa, a weather forecaster with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and a Clover, S.C., native. "This weather support and analysis is vital for planning ground support missions, rescue missions and training operations. We also issue warnings and advisories so Marines are safe during both training and flights." Every element of a weather report is essential in preventing safety hazards during flight. For example, without knowing moisture content, an aircraft may experience icing, the accumulation of ice on an aircraft, as it passes through clouds. Weather is essential for mission completion. It allows Marines to know operation capabilities as well as those of an enemy, explained Sgt. Nate D. Kramer, a forecaster with H&HS and a Jasper, Ind., native. Analysis forecasters also report weather pattern histories for specific regions in monthly climatology briefs. Due to the constant observation of weather patterns and forecasts "pilots are able to make sound decisions on safety during their missions," explained Kruppa.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)

Last to let you down: ejection seat shop

Story and photo by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

It is something that never comes to mind until needed and a situation every pilot hopes they never face. Marines in the ejection seat shop with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (All-Weather) 225 ensure that should an F/A-18 pilot ever need to eject, the process goes smoothly.

"Everyone always thinks of powerlines, airframes and ordnance," said Sgt. Justin English, the noncommissioned officer in charge of VMFA(AW)-225 seat shop and a Westville, Ill., native. "No one ever really thinks of the seat shop. We're kind of the unsung heroes of the squadron."

Though the seat shop may not be recognized until a pilot needs to eject, Marines in the shop are content staying out of the limelight.

"The best part of working in the seat shop is knowing that you're here to save aircrews' lives if you have to," said Gunnery Sgt. David Freed, an aviation life support system division chief with VMFA(AW)-225 and a Boyers, Pa., native.

Visual seat inspections occur daily to ensure seats are fully functional, but every two years the seats are completely torn down and the Marines in the shop test and check every component from the electronic sequencer to the leg restraints.

The full inspection is performed every two years because the more Marines work on this vital equipment the greater the chance a mistake will be made, explained Freed.

"Any other shop can miss something, or not trouble shoot properly and they have a second chance, whereas if we mess up there is no second chance," said English. "Everything that we do has to be done right the first time."

A typical seat shop houses around 14 Marines, but VMFA(AW)-225 only has five, explained English.

Fewer workers results in longer hours and when a Marine from the shop is out for either annual training, medical reasons or leave, the other Marines in the shop change their schedule to cover the shift.

"We're kind of short manned and all of us work extremely hard and long hours to make up for it, but it brings us closer," said English.

The ejection seat shop may not be the first thing that comes to mind for aircraft safety, but when all else fails in the aircraft and a pilot needs to eject, the seat is the one thing that needs to work properly.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)



Gunnery Sgt. David Freed, an aviation life support system division chief with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 225 and a Boyers, Pa., native, tightens every screw for a pilots parachute in an ejection seat here Feb. 10.



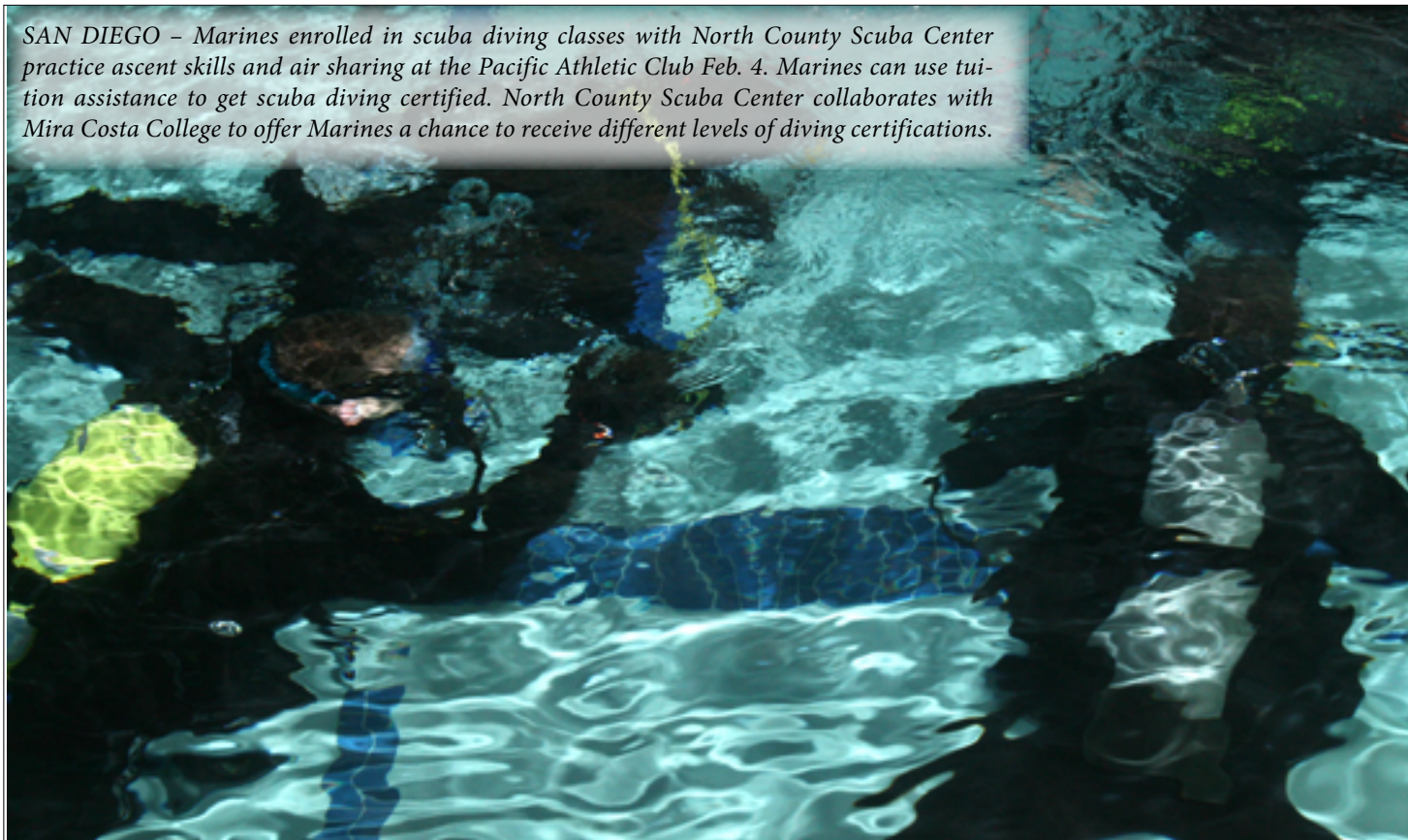
TA picks up scuba tab

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

Some people think of scuba diving as a career, many as just a leisure activity. Regardless of the reason to scuba dive though, it requires certification.

Continued next page

SAN DIEGO – Marines enrolled in scuba diving classes with North County Scuba Center practice ascent skills and air sharing at the Pacific Athletic Club Feb. 4. Marines can use tuition assistance to get scuba diving certified. North County Scuba Center collaborates with Mira Costa College to offer Marines a chance to receive different levels of diving certifications.



What many do not know is that Marines can use tuition assistance to get scuba diving certified. North County Scuba Center collaborates with Mira Costa College to offer them a chance to receive different levels of diving certifications.

The program offers all the levels of certification, from Basic Open Water Diver to Master Diver.

"I love it, it's a great opportunity," said Cpl. Doug Burkhart, an Arabic linguist with 1st Radio Battalion at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and a Porterville, Calif., native. "I've always wanted to scuba dive and [TA] gave me a shot to try it out, and I really liked it."

Service members only have to pay for their gear and North County Scuba Center offers a 10 percent discount for all military personnel.

"A lot of these [Marines] are getting out, the Marine Corps is downsizing and these guys want to have some sort of job," said Greg Knyper, chief diving officer and owner of North County Scuba Center and a Del Mar, Calif., native.

While most might not consider scuba diving as a career, there are several different jobs related to scuba diving, such as rescue diver, underwater weld-

er, underwater tour guide or instructor.

"I know it's a professional certificate, so it just kind of opened up another avenue after the Marine Corps for something I'd want to do," said Burkhart.

The program not only offers a possible career after the Marine Corps, but also provides confidence.

Lance Cpl. Kasey Goulet, an avionics electrician technician with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 and a Vacaville, Calif., native, was shy before entering the program and since being enrolled in the program has gained the confidence to do several different things.

"It gave me the confidence to achieve some goals that I otherwise wouldn't believe in myself to do," said Goulet.

Whether using the certifications to make scuba diving a career or just a hobby, tuition assistance can help cover the cost.

"It was a fun experience and a great experience that I would have never been able to do without taking advantage of TA," said Goulet.

For more information on the program visit <http://northcountyscubacenter.com/usmc-ta-ow-dm-program/>.



LA JOLLA, Calif. – A student diver with North County Scuba Center prepares to enter the Pacific Ocean for a class at La Jolla Shores Feb. 4. Marines can use tuition assistance to help pay for scuba diving certifications with the North County Scuba Center.



SAN DIEGO – Lance Cpl. Kasey Goulet, an avionics electrician technician with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11, practices ascent skills at the Pacific Athletic Club Feb. 4. Marines can use tuition assistance to get scuba diving certified. North County Scuba Center collaborates with Mira Costa College to offer Marines a chance to receive different levels of diving certifications.

The Miramar Minute

MCAS Miramar Fire Department adds two

Video by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

MIRAMAR MINUTE



To view on NMCI computers, click [HERE](#)

To submit a photo to The Flight Jacket, upload it to our Facebook page [HERE](#) or e-mail it [HERE](#).



For information on Marine Corps Community Services, events and announcements click the MCSS logo for their weekly newsletter.

For the Base Guide, click [HERE](#)

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AMERICAN CROWN CIRCUS



Feb. 28, 29 & Mar. 1 at MCAS Miramar
Two Great Shows Each Day
5:00pm & 7:00pm (Just South of the MCX & Commissary)



Pre-Sale

(Available at the ITT / Travel Office)

(Tickets ON SALE NOW through Tuesday Feb. 28 or while supplies last.)

Adults: \$10.00 ages 13 and up

Children: FREE ages 3-12 with paid adult*

Children 2 and under are FREE

*Two Free children's tickets with adult ticket purchase, each additional children's ticket, \$5.00 each.

Day of the Show

(Available at the Circus Box Office, 30 minutes prior to the show)

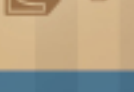
Adults: \$12.00 ages 13 and up

Children: FREE ages 3-12 with paid adult*

Children 2 and under are FREE

*Two Free children's tickets with adult ticket purchase, each additional children's ticket, \$5.00 each.

*Free children's tickets (ages 3-12) are only valid when accompanied to circus with a paid adult.



Seating is first come, first served.
For ticket information call (858) 577-4126/4141.

For more information about the show,
call (858) 577-6365

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MCAS Miramar Chapel: Lent and Easter Worship Services

PROTESTANT

22 Feb - Ash Wednesday: 1200 in Main Chapel

01 April - Palm Sunday: 0900 in Main Chapel

06 April - Good Friday: 1200 in Main Chapel

08 April - Sunrise Service: 0700 in Main Chapel; Easter Service: 0900 in Main Chapel

CATHOLIC

22 Feb - Ash Wednesday: Mass and distribution of ashes at 1600 in Main Chapel

24 Feb - Friday and all Fridays of Lent at 1700: Stations of the Cross devotion in Main Chapel followed by

“Soup and Scripture” in the Fellowship Hall

26 Feb - Sunday and all Sundays of Lent: Acclaimed DVD series “Catholicism” will be shown in Felix Chapel at 0945

1 April - Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion: Procession with palms begins at 11:00 outside of Main Chapel

3 April - Christian Seder meal in Fellowship Hall: (Combined event with Protestant community)

5 April - Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord’s Supper at 1800 in Main Chapel

6 April - Good Friday of the Passion of the Lord: Liturgy in Main Chapel at 1600

8 April - Easter Sunday: Solemn Mass at 1100 in Main Chapel